

REMARKS

Claims 5, 7-9, 12-13, 15, 18-26, and 54-58 are pending. By this Amendment, Claims 11, 16-17, and 59-73 are cancelled and Claims 5, 7, 12, 15, 18, and 55-57 are amended.

The Examiner rejects Claims 5, 7, 9, 11, 16, 24-26, 54-59, 64-66 and 67-73 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Lippert et al. (US 4,861,652; hereinafter "Lippert"); Claims 59-61 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ying et al. (US 6,245,401); Claims 8 and 64 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lippert; Claims 5, 11-13, 15 and 20-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beplate (US 5,221,277; hereinafter Beplate); and Claims 63, 65, and 66 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lippert in view of Beplate. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejection in view of the following remarks.

In the Office Action dated March 13, 2008, the Examiner objects to Claims 17-19 and 62 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicates that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to expedite allowance of the present application, Applicant has amended Claim 5 to include the limitations of allowable Claim 17, including intermediate Claims 11 and 16. It is respectfully submitted that amended independent Claim 5 is allowable over the prior art of record.

Accordingly, allowance of pending Claims 5, 7-9, 12-13, 15, 18-26, and 54-58 is respectfully requested.

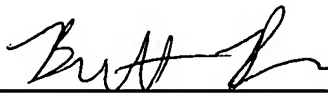
Appl. No. 10/607,975
Response dated June 11, 2008
In Response to Notice of Non-Compliant Amdt. dated May 12, 2008

No fee is deemed necessary with this submission. However, if any additional fee is required to preserve the pendency of the subject application, authorization is hereby given to charge the amount of any such fee to Deposit Account No. 01-1785.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: New York, New York
June 11, 2008

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